

Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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CHURCHES AND INTEGRATION

1954 Biennial Assembly

(During the Boston Biennial Assembly of the National Council of Churches, its Division of Christian Life and Work adopted the following statement with reference to integration in the churches and in our society.)

We commend the policy statements of the General Board renouncing segregation in the churches in the community and supporting the U. S. Supreme Court decision regarding the elimination of segregation in the public schools. In the light of these policy statements the Business Committee of the Division of Christian Life and Work, makes the following proposals on racial segregation in the churches and on desegregation in the public schools.

1. We are aware — and we have been reminded by the reports of our secretaries — that some units within our member churches by customary practice admit or exclude individual members and local churches on the basis of race or color. The inconsistency of such practices with Christian principles has been expressed repeatedly by this body and also, in recent months, by the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

The progress made by governmental and lay groups in recent months, in this difficult area has indeed been remarkable and praiseworthy. It sharpens the need for similar or even greater progress by the churches of Christ.

We call to the attention of our constituent communions, in line with pronouncements of the General Board and the member communions themselves, the need to increase their efforts toward the end that membership in their churches will not depend on race or color.

2. We recognize that the need for Christian understanding of both the religious and legal requirements for racially integrated school systems is particularly acute at this time. In various situations and areas over the nation, sacrifice and bravery appear to be prerequisite in the adjustment of tradition to the teachings of Jesus. Everywhere patience and tolerance are the sine qua non of brotherhood.

We are grateful for the timely action taken by churches, denominations, councils of churches and church women, in areas affected by the Supreme Court decision, especially in situations marked by tension. We encourage our constituent

communions and state and local councils of churches and church women to continue to work in group action; to cooperate with other community agencies, and to marshal individual Christians for the triumph of Christian brotherhood in these months of conflict between the past and the future. The need is urgent and the warning of Jesus is especially relevant: "By their fruits, ye shall know them."

3. Because the churches and the nation are faced with the task of integration in the schools, the present time is of crucial importance to the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations. The need for its leadership, its specialized skills, and its persistent goading of the acquiescent is of primary importance in the domestic program of the Christian churches, and will continue to be so through the next triennium. We therefore ask the Executive Board of the Division of Christian Life and Work to keep the evaluation constantly before it and to give the Department every possible assistance in terms of personnel, budget and moral encouragement. (Adopted by the *Assembly of the Division of Christian Life and Work, National Council of Churches*, December 1, 1954).

Resistance to Integration

Some 250 Methodist leaders from five Southern states pledged . . . to battle racial integration within the church.

Ministers and laymen from Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee and Florida voted to adopt a five-point program designed to halt desegregation attempts in the Methodist Church.

The resolution called for:

1. Church opposition to statements by "Methodist publications, conferences, councils, officials and others" to change the present segregation laws.

2. Formation of a practical plan to inform Methodists of movements to integrate the races in the church.

3. Taking necessary steps to request all delegates to various conferences to oppose integration.

4. Requesting church leaders to present "frank" statements to church mem-

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. Unless so stated, it is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes or positions of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.

bers to inform them how integration would affect the church.

5. Recommendation of committees in "cities, towns and counties" to iron out racial problems caused by "leaders of racial groups." (*New York Herald-Tribune*, December 15).

Toward Integration

Norfolk's (Va.) United Preaching Mission for 1955 . . . brought to Norfolk two-score nationally known ministers and speakers. . . .

Ten denominations and more than 100 churches are represented this year. The mission is conducted under the auspices of the Norfolk Ministers Association, which is now an interracial organization and is conducting the mission on an interracial basis for the first time. This is, perhaps, one of the largest meetings of its kind ever held in Virginia on such a basis, and this lends a special significance to this year's mission. Two Negro ministers are among the visiting speakers . . .

The Norfolk United Preaching Mission is not the first preaching mission in the South to be conducted on an interracial basis. But its planning encountered some problems. It marks an advanced step in an interracial movement which has been gaining strength in this community in recent years and which is reflected in the action of the Norfolk Ministers Association in letting down the barriers. . . . (*Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, January 11).

* * *

In Raleigh (N. C.) the Raleigh Ministerial Association passed a resolution to establish the policy that in the future all community ecumenical services sponsored by the association will be on an interracial basis. A committee was appointed to implement the interracial resolution. (*Southern School News*, January 6).

* * *

After three months' study and discussion, the official board of People's Methodist Church, Woodland, Me., voted on Jan. 3 to support the Geneva Point Pact on pastoral policy. The Woodland church thus became the fourteenth New England church to adopt the pact since it was proposed by Zions Herald in 1953.

The Pact was originally framed by the paper as a means of registering cooperation with the publicly expressed desire of Bishop John Wesley Lord to be able

to find churches to which Negro pastors could be appointed upon occasion. It reads. "In the name of the Father of all mankind, we are resolved that we shall receive fully qualified and regularly appointed pastors without regard to their race, color or national origin." . . . (*Zions Herald*, Boston, Mass. — a Methodist weekly, January 12).

* * *

The Rev. Fred W. Sutton, Jr., who took over an all-Negro Episcopal congregation (in Galveston, Texas) immediately after his graduation from General Theological Seminary, New York, in June, 1953, has succeeded in making it an interracial congregation although the majority is still Negro. . . . (*Religious News Service*, January 17).

DESEGREGATION — PROCESS AND PROBELMS

What Type of Adjustment?

The Supreme Court, at the same time of handing down its decision of last May that racial segregation in public education is unconstitutional, ordered the five cases restored to the docket and asked that further argument be presented by the parties on the kinds of decrees the Court should formulate in order to achieve compliance with its ruling. For guidance in this assistance, the Court propounded two main questions —

Should a decree provide that Negro children "forthwith" be admitted to schools of their choice, or that "an effective gradual adjustment" be brought about?

Should the Court formulate detailed decrees or should it remand to the lower courts with directions to enter decrees consistent with its opinion?

Time for gradual adjustment is recommended, indeed, pleaded for, in the briefs that the four states (Kans., S. C., Va., Del.) and the District of Columbia have submitted in response to the Court's questions. . . .

The Attorney General of the United States, however, although agreeing that an immediate transition to an integrated system is not required, states it as the Government's view that "Relief short of immediate admission to non-segregated schools necessarily implies the continuing deprivation of these (constitutional) rights.

"The right of a colored child not to be segregated while attending public school is one which if not enforced while the child is of school age, loses its value. Hence any delay in granting relief is . . . an irretrievable loss of the right.

"In the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary, therefore," the Attorney General concludes, "there should be no unnecessary delay in the full vindication of the constitutional rights involved in these cases, and if any delay is required, it should be kept to a minimum." . . . (*Memo from Washington Office*, January 5).

EXAMPLES IN INTEGRATION

In West Virginia

A total of 52,545 white and Negro children are attending 135 integrated public schools in West Virginia this year as a result of the U. S. Supreme Court's May 17 decision.

These figures were released recently by Dr. W. W. Trent, state superintendent of free schools.

His Department sent out questionnaires to West Virginia's 55 county school superintendents, asking for a detailed report on integration.

This survey, which produced the first complete statistical breakdown on integration in this border state, revealed that:

(1) 27,337 white and 428 Negro students are attending 49 integrated junior and senior high schools.

(2) 24,198 white and 582 Negro children are attending 86 integrated elementary schools.

(3) 88 school buses are transporting 538 Negro and 3,421 white pupils at the same time.

(4) 19 Negro schools have been abolished this year.

Although some observers feared that most Negro teachers would lose their jobs as a result of integration, no definite discriminatory pattern has emerged in West Virginia.

A total of 15 Negroes and 996 whites are teaching both white and Negro children.

In West Virginia's 26 counties that have integrated or partially integrated schools, eight Negro teachers and five Negro principals have been dropped. . .

But this doesn't mean that all these Negro personnel bowed out because of integration. Some retired, some accepted jobs in other counties. A few without contracts weren't re-hired.

No cases have been reported of Negro teachers with contracts who were dismissed in desegregated counties. . . .

On the college level, another survey conducted by Dr. Trent's office revealed that Negroes are attending 10 of the 11 state colleges, which were opened to Negroes last spring by the state Board of Education.

A total of 1,245 Negro and 13,344 white students are enrolled at the 11 institutions.

West Virginia State College at Institute, near the capital city of Charleston, demonstrates what can happen under desegregation.

One of the nation's outstanding Negro colleges, West Virginia State now has 182 full-time white students out of a total enrollment of 983.

Many other whites are enrolled on a part-time basis since the Institute school is the only state-supported college in the Greater Charleston area.

Three whites are attending West Virginia's other former all-Negro college, Bluefield State at Bluefield just across the Virginia border. . . . (*Southern School News*, January 6).

In Missouri

The suburban township of Kirkwood (Mo.) will end teacher segregation in the district next September, according to a resolution adopted (recently) by the district's Board of Education.

The resolution provides that "recommendations for the hiring, transfer or dismissal of teachers be based solely upon competency, without respect to race or color."

Board of Education President F. Burton Sawyer said that while the resolution is effective immediately, it probably will not be felt until next September, when teachers are employed and assigned for the 1955-56 school session. Any transfer or dismissals that might occur in the interim will be in accordance with the new policy, however. . . .

Segregation of pupils at all levels is to end next September, when a new high school, currently under construction, is opened. (*Kansas City Call*, January 21).

Church-Related Colleges

For too long a time the private church-related college has been bound by racial restrictions. It is now free of these fetters. Among the factors responsible for its new position are:

The Supreme Court decision, declaring segregation in public schools unconstitutional, has made null and void state laws requiring racial separation in educational institutions.

State colleges and universities, now open to Negro students, have had good experience in the inclusion of Negroes in their student bodies.

The controlling bodies of many colleges, including trustees and church conventions, are showing awareness of the Christian moral rightness of non-segregation in education.

Many students in white colleges want their schools to overcome the stigma of racial segregation and discrimination and are articulate in saying so.

Community life in America is demonstrating flexibility as the trend toward desegregation grows.

These emerging factors plus a more vigorous application of our Christian faith in personal and common life, can provide the needed stimulus for overcoming racial segregation and discrimination in church-related colleges. (Taken from an article by L. Maynard Catchings in *The Intercollegian*, January, 1955. Reprints of the entire article may be obtained by writing to Mr. Catchings at the National Council, Y.M.C.A., 291 Broadway, New York, N. Y.).

NSSFNS Scholarships

The total of 191 southern Negro high school graduates enrolling in 103 interracial colleges throughout the country last September under the NSSFNS (National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students) Southern Project is the largest movement of segregated high school stu-

dents into non-segregated colleges ever to take place in one year.

The achievements of these students were made possible by the testing, counselling, placement, and scholarship activities conducted at 81 Negro high schools in the 45 largest southern cities.

A total of 1,485 students, selected by their principals and counsellors as constituting the top 10% of their senior classes, were originally included in the first year's group. In the end, 207 of those who qualified, completed "before deadline" applications for both admission and scholarship help to one or more interracial colleges. Of these, 197 or 19 of each 20, were accepted by one or more colleges and 191 have enrolled this fall in 103 colleges. . . .

The important substantial increase in the numbers accepted, enrolling, and awarded scholarships is almost entirely attributable to three factors: (1) individual, personalized, and informed counselling (2) screening by the same aptitude test used by many of the colleges; and (3) the willingness of colleges to award maximum scholarships to those students for whose total needs even these large awards were insufficient. . . . (*Opportunity News*, January, 1955).

In New York City

Charges of racial segregation and discrimination in the public schools (in New York, N. Y.) are to get what looks like a thorough-going double investigation.

A few months ago a public statement by Prof. Kenneth Clark of City College appeared protesting the lowered educational standards which he said are found in some schools where Negro and Puerto Rican children are "segregated."

Taking the stand that "separate but equal" facilities is a concept that "denies the basic right of every American child to equality of educational opportunity," the Public Education Association announces that it is undertaking a 10-months' survey of the situation. Not only will Professor Clark's charges be examined, there will be a positive effort to find ways of facilitating racial integration in the public schools, says William B. Nichols, president of the association.

The Board of Education also has embarked on a study of the racial composition of the schools. A special commission has been created for the purpose of recommending "whatever further action is necessary to come closer to the ideal of the racially integrated school." . . .

"Segregation strikes hard at the roots of democratic society," says the PEA statement of principle.

"It remains for the American people to increase their efforts to wipe out segregation, illegal or de facto, until no trace of the blight remains in our educational system. In New York City, with its millions of inhabitants of every race, creed and color, it is especially important to investigate reports of segregation and eliminate it where it is found to exist.

This is a job for both our school authorities and community as a whole." . . . (*Christian Science Monitor*, January 22).

ECONOMIC BOYCOTT

Segregation or economic boycott — for those who try to mix the races — is a new slogan that has cropped up in the South.

The rallying cry was born in Mississippi in a move to combat racial integration in the schools following the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that segregation was unconstitutional. It has spread with the organization of "white councils" in Alabama and Georgia as well. The leaders claim it will soon encompass the entire southland.

This movement to maintain separate white and Negro schools as well as other forms of segregation, is using economic boycott as its chief weapon. . . .

Members of the all-white, all-male groups, many of whose leaders are prominent men, denied any idea of going back to the old Klan methods and say they do not believe in violence, except possibly as a last resort.

The groups behind the movement are called by several names, including white citizens councils, but their purpose is uniform — to maintain racial segregation.

Their legal advisors say no law will be broken. They have volumes of court cases, they say, to back up every move they plan to take.

Apparently, the movement has reached a peak of organization in several places, notably, Dallas County, Alabama. . . .

Jeff S. Williams of Lexington, Miss. who helped the Dallas group organize recently, said this is how the plan works:

"If I had a Negro working for me, and he belonged to the NAACP or some similar group, I'd do the same thing I'd do to any Negro working for me who wanted to cause trouble . . . I'd just let him go.

"When the Negro tried to obtain work elsewhere in the region, he would find no jobs available. When he tried to borrow money, or even buy food in the stores, he would be met with a curt 'we don't have any money to lend,' or, 'that item is not in stock.'" . . .

Federal and state authorities undoubtedly are aware of the councils but if they are doing anything about the movement they aren't saying so. U. S. Attorney Percy Fountain of the South Alabama District refused to comment when asked about the white councils movement, declaring "I'd be forbidden to say anything."

Acting Attorney General Bernard Sykes of Alabama also refused to say much. "The only thing I know about the thing," he said, "is what I've seen in the papers." He added that "I'd like to study the matter thoroughly when I have the opportunity," but stressed this did not mean he presently was investigating the councils' movement. . . . (*Norfolk Journal and Guide*, January 15).

* * *

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (recently) initiated a plan designed to make financial assistance more readily available to Negro farmers, businessmen, professional men and homeowners in Mississippi where certain white banks and businesses have conspired to foreclose mortgages, deny normal extensions and refuse credit to members of the NAACP or to any other Negro demanding the right to vote and the implementation of the Supreme Court's May 17 decision banning segregation in the public schools.

The NAACP plan, approved by the association's board of directors, provides for the strengthening of the resources of the Negro-owned Tri-State Bank of Memphis, through substantially increasing its deposits thereby making available more money for commercial loans to the Mississippi victims.

Expressing the hope that the plan would expand the assets of the bank by at least \$250,000, the NAACP made an initial deposit of \$20,000 of its reserve funds in the Tri-State Bank. In a letter to Dr. John E. Walker, president, transmitting the deposit, Roy Wilkins, NAACP administrator, said that the NAACP expects the loans to be made on a "strict business basis with applicants meeting the usual requirements of the bank in such matters." . . .

Details of the plan were worked out in Memphis by Mr. Wilkins in collaboration with Dr. Walker and other officers of the bank. . . .

In addition to efforts to enlarge the resources of the Tri-State Bank, the NAACP is investigating the national connections of the various Mississippi business enterprises which are participating in this conspiracy to deny credit to Negro civil rights advocates. Some of these Mississippi institutions are known to be subsidiaries or affiliates of national corporations. (*Kansas City Call*, January 14).

PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE

President Eisenhower created (on Jan. 18) in his own Executive organization a committee to prevent racial, creed or color bias in government jobs.

The Committee on Government Employment Policy supplants the Civil Service Commission's Fair Employment Board. The Executive order said the board's records and property would be available to the new committee.

James C. Hagerty, the President's press secretary, said that the new group, "established at Presidential level," would have "increased stature" over the abolished board, since it would report directly to the President.

In addition to advising the President periodically and Cabinet officers at their request, the committee will cooperate with the Civil Service Board. It will review cases and make such inquiries as it may consider necessary to weed out job discrimination in government.

The Executive order made the head of each Government department and agency responsible for carrying out the Administration's anti-discrimination policies. Each Cabinet officer and agency head also was instructed to name a member of his official staff as "employment policy officer." He must be selected outside of the personnel division.

This officer, with as many deputies as might be needed would be charged with searching his department to see that anti-discrimination regulations were carried out. He would receive and relay complaints and appraise personnel operations "at regular intervals to assure their continuing conformity to the policy expressed in this order."

All complaints and action taken on them would be reported to the committee. Any case "within purview of the order" may be referred to it "for a review and advisory opinion." . . . (*New York Times*, January 19).

A PATH IS CLEARED

The Norfolk County (Va.) Medical Society has completed the process by which its membership will be open to Negro doctors. A constitutional amendment permitting the induction of Negro members was proposed a month ago and has now been ratified. The action conforms to action taken by the Medical Society of Virginia last November. . . . The change has not been advocated primarily for the personal benefit of the Negro physician, but as a means of improving the medical care of the Negro population. For only through membership in the State society can the Negro physician reach membership in the American Medical Association—and without that membership the big clinics, in which he is able to improve his medical knowledge and technique, are closed to him.

Nearly all the Negro population in Virginia is served by Negro doctors. The latest available figures show one Negro doctor for about 5,000 of population. In basic training the Negro physicians and white physicians as a rule are on practically the same level. But so long as the facilities for clinical study are closed to him the Negro doctor is seriously handicapped in advancement in his professional proficiency.

Lowering the bars against membership in the Medical Society of Virginia—through membership in local societies—opens a new frontier to the Negro doctor. It affords him an opportunity he has not had before to enlarge his service to his people. (*Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*, January 12).

HOUSING SUIT

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People . . . filed two suits in Federal court . . . in the first action in the East to prevent racial discrimination in FHA-insured homes and apartments.

Named as defendants were Levitt and Sons, developer of the model communities

of Levittown, N. Y., and Levittown, Pa., and a Philadelphia apartment house. . . .

The NAACP said it acted after two years of negotiations with FHA and other housing officials in Washington in an attempt to get the FHA to establish a no-discrimination requirement in FHA developments.

One was brought in behalf of six Negro veterans who said they were denied the right to buy homes in the community Levitt & Sons constructed in Bucks County, Pa. The other suit was filed in behalf of a Philadelphia couple and other Negroes who said they were refused apartments in the Olney Gardens project in North Philadelphia.

Also named defendants in the suits were the commissioner of the Federal Housing Authority, the administrator of Veterans Affairs and the local directors of the FHA and VA mortgage insuring divisions. (*N. Y. World Telegram & Sun*, January 13).

BRIEFLY

Dr. George E. Haynes,* formerly a member of the State University of New York Board of Trustees, has been appointed to the New York State committee to participate in the White House Conference on Education, by former Gov. Thomas E. Dewey.

The committee, which held its first meeting . . . January 14, will review and analyze education within the state and submit recommendations to the conference called by President Eisenhower for next fall. . . .

Dr. Haynes has taught in world affairs and interracial adjustment at City College for the past four years. He will also continue as consultant for Africa on the World's Committee YMCA's and will devote time as a consultant to business firms. . . . (*Afro-American*, January 22).

* Dr. Haynes was also formerly Executive Secretary of the Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches.

SUGGESTED READING

Segregation and the Schools, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 209, Public Affairs Pamphlets, 22 E. 38th St., New York 16, N. Y. 25 cents.

Schools in Transition, edited by Robin M. Williams and Margaret W. Ryan, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C. \$3.00.

Social Progress—Segregation on Sunday, January 1955 issue, Dept. of Social Education and Action, Presbyterian Church, USA, 830 Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia 7, Pa.

Christian Friends Bulletin, December, 1954, Anti-Defamation League, 212 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

The Intercollegian—Beyond Desegregation: Community, January 1955 issue, National Council, YMCA, 291 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y.:

* * *

The following are available from the American Jewish Committee, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

The People Take the Lead, A Record of Progress in Civil Rights, 1948 to 1955. Anti-Semitic Activity in the United States, A Report and Appraisal, 10 cents.

The following are available from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.:

Rearing Children of Good Will—How to help children grow up free from prejudice, 25 cents.

Education in a Transition Community, by Jean D. Grambs, 25 cents.

* * *

The following are available from the NAACP, 20 West 40th St., New York 18, N. Y.:

Target for 1963—Goals of the Fight for Freedom

The Forgotten People

The Schools That Broke the Color Line, a reprinted article.

Guidepost to Freedom

NAACP 45th Annual Conference Resolutions

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